

Physical therapist speaks of love of woodworking and helping people regain strength and mobility

Kelsey Cushey began her education at LTS, then got a Bachelor's degree and doctorate from Slippery Rock University

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Kelsey Cushey, D. PT., who is now the director of WESTARM Physical Therapy in Rayburn Township as well as being a physical therapist there, went to college after graduating to Lenape Technical School (LTS). Submitted

An Armstrong County woman who grew up outside of Cowansville doing woodworking is now using her hands to help “put people back together” after surgeries and injuries.

Physical therapist Kelsey Cushey attended Lenape Technical School (LTS), where she studied woodworking, as a teenager.

While there, she helped other students build a house for Armstrong Habitat for Humanity (AHFH), and also created furniture ranging from stools to cabinets.

The largest project she created was a tall, slender display cabinet, Cushey said.

At the same time, from her sophomore year on, she knew she wanted to be a physical therapist, she added.

“I chose the profession because I always enjoyed working with other people as well as working with my hands and getting people back where they want to be,” said Cushey recently.

At LTS, she was also selected as valedictorian from a class of 200 students, according to Jeffrey Jacob of WESTARM Physical Therapy and Homecare.

While still at LTS, Cushey served as shop president, senior class president and a member of the National Honor Society, Jacobs wrote.

After graduation, she decided to enroll in a program at Slippery Rock University that allows students to pursue a Bachelor's degree in three years.

As a result, Cushey got a Bachelor of Science in exercise science, and then a Doctorate in Physical Therapy (D.PT.) in three additional years.

She started as the facility director of the Rayburn Township office of WESTARM Physical Therapy, which has a Kittanning mailing address, in December 2010, after interning in the same office in 2008.

Cushey said the office provides physical therapy for clients of a wide range of ages and circumstances, including recent surgery and accident patients, young athletes, people with gait and balance issues, and those with concussions, among others.

She said one young soccer player with an ankle injury did all needed rehabilitation and returned to being a goalie.

Cushey said new shoulder surgery and shoulder rehab techniques are enabling people to return to a full work schedule, including people who perform physical labor jobs.

“I would say the most satisfying parts of the job are seeing people's ability to return to doing the things they want to do,” she said.

Cushey said she enjoys running and increasing her educational knowledge.

She and her husband and family reside in Armstrong County.

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